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WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

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SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

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The Carolinas emerge as new population boom states. Affordability and lifestyle drive growth

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press
ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Move over Florida and Texas. The United States has new hot spots for growth, and they both have Carolina in their name.

North Carolina last year attracted more new residents, 84,000 people, from other parts of the country than any other state, a title held by Texas in 2024 and Florida in the two years before that. South Carolina had the highest overall growth rate last year at 1.5%, a distinction among states held by Florida in 2024, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures released this past week.

Domestic migration, or people moving within the U.S., slowed in Texas. The 67,300



The sun rises over Isle of Palms, S.C., Aug. 13, 2022.

domestic migrants heading to the second most populous state year over year barely squeaked by South Carolina, which had the third highest number of domestic migrants at 66,600.

The appeal of Florida, the nation's third most populous state, dimmed. It dropped to No. 8 for state-to-state migration, as more U.S. residents preferred to move elsewhere, including Alabama.

Sabrina Morley and Steven Devereaux sold their Tampa-area house last year, moved out of Florida and landed outside Valencia, Spain. Growing up in the 1990s, they both enjoyed Florida's diversity and being able to run around freely outdoors. But in recent years, as they planned to have children, they had grown wary of the state's costs, regular threats of mass shootings at schools, the quality of education and political divisiveness. They are expecting a daughter in the spring.

"I had a pretty good childhood, but I don't think we'd be able to give our child the same quality of life because of the cost of living, food quality, and guns have become more prevalent," Devereaux said. "We think where we are now, it's the best decision we could make to give any future children the best quality of life."

In the next few years, domestic migration is going to play a larger role in states' growth or population decline. That is because the Trump administration's immigration crackdown has contributed to a significant reduction in migration from abroad, which had been the prime driver of growth in most states for the first half of this decade.

Without immigration growth, the U.S. population will start shrinking in five years as deaths outpace births, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Pandemic boom peters out

Despite the comparative year-over-year slowdown in domestic migration, Texas' overall growth of 391,000 people and Florida's overall growth of 196,000 people were still the two highest in the U.S. last year.

In Florida, it was driven by international migration, and in Texas by international migration as well as births outpacing deaths. Both states boomed during the early part of the decade, when pandemic-era lockdowns and remote work encouraged residents from other states to move to Florida and Texas, where coronavirus restrictions were more lax.

"The sharp domestic migrations they observed during the pandemic have now petered out, especially for Florida, at the same time that immigration is being diminished," said Brookings demographer William Frey.

Younger folks and nice areas

North Carolina state demographer Michael Cline credited the state's growth to high-paying jobs in banking and tech, the topographical diversity and having smaller big-cities than Florida and Texas.

"North Carolina is attracting younger folks because we have so many nice areas in North Carolina — the mountains and beaches and lakes in between — that we're benefiting from younger people who decided they can work from anywhere and would rather be in a nice area," Cline said.

"One of the things about North Carolina, our cities are not huge, and that may be attractive to folks, too." Last year's changes among the states were significant because population growth brings more taxpayers, economic dynamism and demand for goods and services. It also signals potential changes in the nation's political landscape after the next census in 2030, with certain states gaining or losing clout in Congress and the Electoral College.

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One Tech Tip: Escape the AI junk crowding your social media and music streams

By **KELVIN CHAN**
AP Business Writer

AI slop seems to be everywhere. Low-quality digital content made with artificial intelligence has flooded our feeds, screens and speakers. Is there anything we can do about it?

If you want fewer cartoonish videos of dead celebrities, creepy or absurd images or fake bands playing synthetic tunes, a few platforms have rolled out settings and features to help minimize AI-generated content.

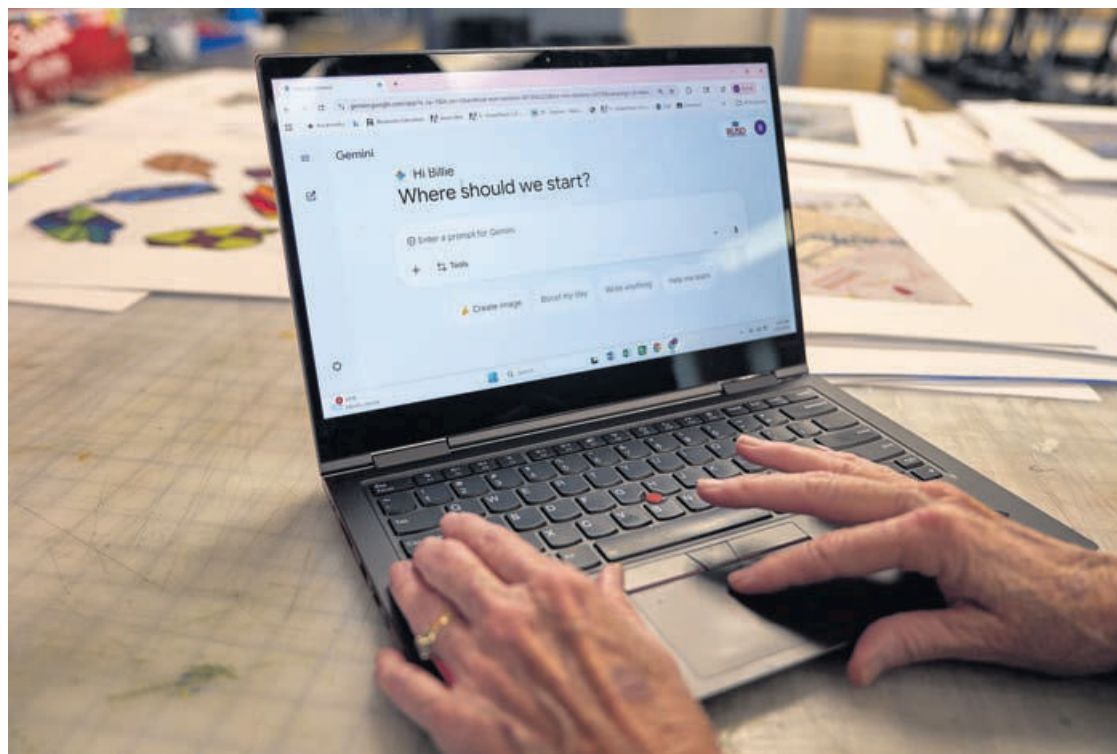
Here is a guide on how to use them. But first, a caveat from Henry Ajder, who advises businesses and governments on AI and has been studying deepfakes since 2018. He warned that it's "incredibly difficult" to entirely remove AI slop content entirely from all your feeds.

He compared AI slop to the smog generated from the industrial revolution, when there weren't any pollution controls in place.

"It's going to be very, very hard for people to avoid inhaling, in this analogy."

Pinterest

Pinterest's move to lean into the AI boom made it something of a poster child for the AI slop problem, as user complained that the online moodboard for pinning inspi-



Art teacher Joyce Hatzidakis uses the AI tool Google Gemini in her high school classroom Thursday, Jan. 22, 2026, Riverside, Calif.

ration material by themes has become overrun with AI content.

So Pinterest recently rolled out a "tuner" that lets users adjust the amount of AI content they see in their feeds. It rolled out first on Android and desktop operating systems, before starting on a more gradual roll out on iOS. "Now, users can dial down the AI and add more of a human touch," Pinterest said, adding that it would initially cover some categories that are "highly prone to AI modifi-

cation or generation" such as beauty, art, fashion and home decor.

More categories have since been added, including architecture, art, beauty, entertainment, men's, women's and children's fashion, health, home décor, and sport, food and drink.

To use the tuner, go to Settings and then to "refine your recommendations," and then tap on GenAI interests, where you can use toggles to indicate the categories you'd like to see less

AI-content.

TikTok

It's no surprise that AI-generated videos proliferate on TikTok, the short-video sharing app. The company says there are at least 1.3 billion video clips on its platform it has labeled as AI-generated. TikTok said in November it was testing an update to give users more control of the AI-generated content in their For You feeds. It's not clear when it will be widely available. TikTok did not respond

to requests for comment. To see if you have it on the TikTok mobile app, go to Settings, then Content Preferences, then to Manage Topics where you'll see a set of sliders to control various types of content, such as dance, humor, lifestyle and nature.

You can also access the controls from the For You feed, by tapping the Share button on the side of a post, then tap Why this Video, then Adjust your For You, and then Manage topics.

There should be a new slider that allows you to dial down — or turn up — the amount of AI-generated content that you receive. If you don't see it yet, it might be because you haven't received the update yet. TikTok said late last year that it would start testing the feature in coming weeks.

These controls are not available on the desktop browser interface.

You won't be able to get rid of AI content altogether — TikTok says the controls are used to tailor the content rather than removing or replacing it entirely from feeds. "This means that people who love AI-generated history content can see more of this content, while those who'd rather see less can choose to dial things down," it said. □

After 200 years, the Farmers' Almanac bets on a digital reboot and new owner

By **PATRICK WHITTLE**
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The Farmers' Almanac isn't going out of business after all, but it is leaving Maine for the bright lights of New York City and a new owner.

Beloved by farmers and gardeners, the almanac was first printed in 1818 and — like the arguably more famous Old Farmer's Almanac — relies on a secret formula of sunspots, planetary positions and lunar cycles to generate long-range weather forecasts. It's been acquired by Unofficial Networks, a digital publisher focused on skiing and outdoor recreation.

That means the almanac will keep operating despite announcing in November that its 208-year run was coming to an end. A new Farmers' Almanac website will be "a living, breathing publication with fresh, daily content" and there are plans to bring back a print edition, said Tim Konrad, founder and publisher of New York-based Unofficial Networks.

"I saw the announcement that one of America's most enduring publications was set to close," Konrad said, "and it felt wrong to stand by while an irreplaceable piece of our national heritage disappeared."

The deal will prioritize "preserving and sustaining the iconic publication," according to a statement from Unofficial Networks and Peter Geiger, the almanac's longtime publisher.

The Farmers' Almanac was founded in New Jersey before moving its headquarters to Lewiston, Maine, in 1955. The Old Farmer's Almanac is based in New Hampshire. Over the years, scientists have sometimes chafed at the publications' predictions. Studies of their accuracy have found them to be a little more than 50% accurate. That is about on par with random chance. But Geiger, whose family



A copy of the final edition of the Farmers' Almanac is seen, Friday, Nov. 7, 2025, in Alexander, Maine.

Associated Press

had the Farmers' Almanac for more than 90 years, said they're "going out a winner" by having predicted a cold and snowy 2026.

"For more than 200 years, the values and wisdom of the Farmers' Almanac have

been protected and nurtured by four owner-publishers," Geiger said. "I am grateful to have found the right next custodian in Tim Konrad. I am also confident he will honor its heritage and carry it forward for generations to come." □

Chaka Khan, Cher, Whitney Houston, Fela Kuti get Grammys Life Achievement Awards

By **ANDREW DALTON**

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Chaka Khan, Cher, Carlos Santana, Paul Simon, Fela Kuti and Whitney Houston received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Recording Academy at the Grammys Special Merit Awards on Saturday night.

"Music has been my prayer, my healing, my joy, my truth," Khan said as she accepted the award. "Through it, I saved my life."

She was the only Lifetime Achievement recipient who appeared at the ceremony at the small Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles on the eve of Sunday's main Grammys ceremony.

She was preceded by a short documentary on her career that highlighted her hits as a member of the funk band Rufus and as a solo artist, including 1974's Stevie Wonder-written "Tell Me Something Good," 1983's "Ain't Nobody," 1978's "I'm Every Woman" and 1984's Prince-penned "I Feel For You."

Wearing a shimmering sea green gown, she thanked her many collaborators while admitting not all of them were entirely sane. "Over 50 years I am blessed to walk alongside extraordinary artists, musicians, writers, producers and cre-



Chaka Khan arrives at the Recording Academy's Special Merit Awards on Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles.

atives," she said, pausing before adding, "and cuckoos."

Family accepted the Lifetime Achievement Awards for the Nigerian Afrobeat legend Kuti, who died in 1997, and the singing superstar Houston, who died in 2012.

"Her voice — that voice! — remains eternal," Pat Houston, Whitney's sister-in-law, close friend and longtime manager, said. "Her legacy will live forever."

Three of his children accepted the award for Kuti, introduced as a "producer,

arranger, political radical, outlaw and the father of Afrobeat." He's the first African musician to get the award. "Thank you for bringing our father here," Femi Kuti said. "It's so important for us, it's so important for Africa, it's so important for world peace and the struggle."

The audience gave a collective moan of disappointment when academy President Harvey Mason Jr. said Cher wasn't there. She spoke in a very short video.

"The only thing I ever wanted

to be was a singer. When I was 4 years old I used to run around the house naked, singing into a hair brush," she said. "Things haven't changed all that much." Santana also spoke on video, after his son, Salvador, accepted his trophy. "The world is so infected with fear that we need the music and message of Santana to bring hope, courage and joy to heal the world," Carlos Santana said. Elton John's longtime lyricist Bernie Taupin paid tribute to Simon, calling him "the greatest American songwriter

alive." Taupin was there as one of the recipients of the Grammys Trustees Award, which honors career contributions outside of performing.

Despite co-writing the vast majority of John's hits, Taupin has somehow never won a competitive Grammy, though he's nominated for one Sunday.

"I've been waiting 57 years for one of these," he said, looking at his honorary trophy.

Taupin read a list of the songwriting principles he's always followed. They included "avoid cliches," "never write songs in cubicles" and "don't say you're going to die if she leaves you — because you're not."

Eddie Palmieri, a pianist, composer and bandleader who was a great innovator in Latin jazz and rumba, also got a Trustees Award. Palmieri, who died last year at 88, became the first Latino to win a Grammy Award, in 1975.

Another trustees honoree was Sylvia Rhone, the first Black woman to head a major record label.

John Chowning, whose work as a Stanford professor in the 1960s was essential to the synthesizer sounds that dominated the 1980s, won the Technical Grammy Award. □

Antoine Fuqua's 'Troublemaker' lets Nelson Mandela speak for himself



Nelson Mandela receives the Martin Luther King Jr. International Freedom Award from King's widow Coretta Scott King during a ceremony at the Big Bethel AME church in Atlanta, June 27, 1990.

Associated Press

By **LINDSEY BAHR**

AP Film Writer

PARK CITY, Utah (AP) — An-

toine Fuqua always knew Nelson Mandela as an icon. But he had no idea he was

such a rebel too, and a literal fighter. He remembered walking into a restaurant and seeing a picture of a man in a boxing stance and asked why they had a poster of Muhammad Ali on the wall. They didn't, he was told: It was Mandela.

It was just part of what would be an enlightening journey in making the new documentary, "Troublemaker," which has its world premiere Tuesday at the Sundance Film Festival.

"He evolved into the Mandela that we all know and love," Fuqua said. "The troublemaker allows you to sort of see him not just a mythi-

cal character or as a global icon, but as a fallible human being, someone who became a great leader, who in the beginning was a rebel, if you will, and who was willing to engage in violence at some point, if necessary, for the greater good."

The film uses Mandela's own voice, drawn from over 70 hours of recordings to tell the story of the struggle against apartheid. Fuqua collaborated closely with Mac Maharaj, an anti-apartheid activist, who was imprisoned on Robben Island with Mandela and who played a key part in smuggling Mandela's writings, which would become "Long Walk to Freedom," out

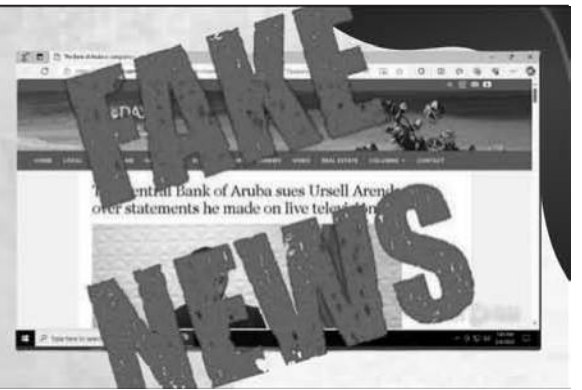
of the prison. Fuqua, Maharaj and the filmmaking team traveled all around South Africa, visiting important locations in Mandela's story, from the University of Fort Hare, where Mandela was a student before being expelled for protest activities, and Robben Island, where he was imprisoned from 1964 to 1982, to Qunu, his final resting place. He even slept a few nights on Robben Island, which he said was "very uncomfortable."

While there they got a feeling for where Mandela spent 18 of his 27 imprisoned years and bonded at night over dinners. □

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New campaign calls on Mexicans to rediscover the capital's heart through revered churches

By **MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ**

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — La Profesa church in downtown Mexico City has endured through a tumultuous history. An uprising left bullet holes in its walls in 1847. A fire devoured its wooden floors decades later. Its foundation continues to sink due to unstable ground.

"What makes this space important is that it remains alive and continues to be in use," art historian Alejandro Hernández said.

Hernández works with a handful of experts to preserve and promote the capital's heritage through the Mexico City Historic Center Trust, which operates under the municipal government.

The trust recently launched an initiative aimed at encouraging Mexicans to reconnect with the historic heart of the city. The program includes visits to more than 40 churches, among them La Profesa, as part of 26 cultural activities planned for 2026.

"We wish for young people to get interested in their own heritage," said Anabelí Contreras, head of outreach at the trust.

Her team constantly runs campaigns highlighting historical facts about the area. They promote workshops and exhibitions, such as one celebrating the 700th anniversary of the founding of Tenochtitlan, the powerful Aztec capital that once stood on the site of present-day Mexico City. And the trust's magazine, Kilómetro Cero, showcases hidden gems in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Experts like Hernández go one step further. They team



Santo Domingo church stands in Mexico City, Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026.

up to restore treasured buildings like La Profesa, which was severely damaged by a deadly earthquake in 2017.

"After the quake, the valuable art collection inside the sanctuary's gallery suffered the most," he said. "We haven't been able to reopen that space to the public yet, but we're working on it."

A collection brought back to life

Each building overseen by the trust has treasures to protect. La Profesa's uniqueness lies in the paintings it preserves, Hernández said.

"What is exceptional is that so many of the paintings originally made for the church have survived," he said.

Founded by the Jesuits in 1610, the site later took the form of the church seen today. It was rebuilt by renowned architect Pedro de Arrieta in 1714.

Its heritage includes textiles

worn to this day by priests celebrating Mass, relics displayed each Nov. 2 to mark Día de Muertos, the Day of the Dead, and the artworks that led to the inauguration of a public gallery in the 1970s.

"The heritage found in this church today dates from the 17th through the 21st centuries," Hernández said.

The gallery safeguarding La Profesa's paintings lies hidden from sight on its upper floor. The space now looks renewed, but bringing it back to life was a delicate, almost surgical process.

Alejandra Barrón, an architect from the trust who oversaw its two restoration stages, said some of the cracks left by the 2017 quake were so severe that one could look into the walls of neighboring buildings.

"The entire floor was replaced, the cracks were stitched together, and the plasterwork was carefully restored," she said.

There is still work to be done

and the timing of its completion remains uncertain. But for now, Barrón is relieved to see some of the artworks hanging on the walls again. "It's unusual to find a church that can also serve as a gallery or a museum," she said. "If these paintings were removed from here, they would no longer carry the same meaning."

Associated Press

Church and plaza bear witness to history

A few meters (yards) away stands the church of Santo Domingo. Founded by Dominican friars in the 16th century and rebuilt by de Arrieta nearly two centuries later, the sanctuary bears witness to the capital's transformation.

The church currently dominates the landscape, yet it used to be part of a far larger complex. Most of its chapels and convent gradually were destroyed. A new street was later paved through the site, effectively splitting the complex into two.

Across from the church stands a residential compound where remains of the convent's arches can be seen. The trust works closely with the community to preserve the site.

María Esther Centeno has lived there for decades. Dozens of Mexicans like her were offered an apartment in the area after a devastating quake in 1985 left many without a home.

"When they (from the trust) came to fix this place, we learned about its history," she said. "There used to be a dining hall. On that other side were the nuns' cells."

Neither the homes nor other buildings underwent restoration after the 2017 quake. However, the church still hurts from the tragedy.

The trust's architect overseeing its renovations knows the building like the back of his hand. A hidden clock, a wall shadowed by the organ and the bell tower all had cracks repaired by Jesús Martínez and his team.

"To me, this is the most important sanctuary in Mexico's historic center after the cathedral," Martínez said. "The choir stalls are unique because they are original — they haven't been broken up or replaced."

On a recent morning in late January, María Lourdes Floata entered Santo Domingo by chance.

She traveled from the state of Yucatán in southern Mexico to visit the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. While walking across downtown, the church caught her eye. "This is my first time here and we decided to come in," she said. "It's so beautiful. I love all the images it preserves." □

Iraqi calligrapher's handwritten Quran ends 6 years of artistry and craft

By **AYSE WIETING**
Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Iraqi calligrapher Ali Zaman gazes with pride at his masterpiece — a colossal, handwritten manuscript of the Quran that has taken six years of craft and devotion to complete. The finished work consists of 302 double sided scrolls, each measuring 4 meters (13 feet) in length and 1.5 meters in width. The sheets, resembling heavy parchment, were custom made for Zaman with a blend of traditional materials including eggs, corn starch and alum. "Anytime I think of this Quran ... it gives me very nice feeling that the mighty God gave me the life to be able to finish this thing and complete it. I feel very proud," the 54-year-old told The Associated Press at a mosque in Istanbul where the manuscript is kept. Islamic calligraphy is regarded as one of the most valued artistic traditions in the Muslim world. The art form served to preserve and embellish Islam's holy book and was later also used to adorn mosques, palaces and manuscripts. In Turkey, it flourished during the Ottoman era when the art was supported by the state and calligraphers developed distinctive styles.



A Syrian Shiite man reads the holy book of Quran in front of portraits of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, right, and the late Iranian revolutionary founder Ayatollah Khomeini, left, at the Imam Ali Housing Compound, where hundreds of mostly Lebanese and Syrian Shiite Muslims displaced from Syria reside, in Hermel, northeast Lebanon, Friday, Jan. 30, 2026.

Associated Press

Today, Istanbul is considered an important center for the art, known as "hat" in Turkish. Art expert Umit Coskunsu says that because of the Islamic tradition's restrictions on depicting figures, calligraphy became a central form of artistic expression. He describes "hat" as a form of worship. "The art of hat is not just

calligraphy, it is seen as a means of worshipping God and coming closer to Him," Coskunsu said. Zaman was born in Ranya, a town in Sulaymaniyah governorate, in Iraq's northern semi-autonomous Kurdish region. He moved his family to Istanbul in 2017 to pursue his Quran project and to hone his craft because, he says,

the art of calligraphy is more valued in Turkey than in his home country. Zaman says he developed an interest in Islamic calligraphy around the age of 12 when he was first exposed to it in Iraq. "The art of calligraphy was very attractive to me... I felt that I could find my soul in it," he said. Each sheet of the manuscript

was entirely handwritten. Zaman says he labored from dawn to dusk over a period of six years in a small room reserved for him at the Mihrimah Sultan Mosque in Istanbul.

The manuscript is being touted as the world's largest, though it has not received that recognition officially. According to Guinness World Records, the largest printed Quran was achieved by the Holy Quran Museum in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in March 2025.

Zaman's son remembers long absences while his father worked on the project. "We only saw him when we would bring him food or when he came home at night to sleep," said Rekar Zaman. "Thank God, we see more of him now."

The manuscript is stored in stacked scrolls, and covered for protection from dust and moisture, at the mosque where he created it. His ultimate wish is for it to go to a buyer who can put it on public display. "I want for this Quran to be in a country — in a museum, or in a place that is special for calligraphy — where it can be appreciated and valued," Zaman said. □

A chatbot entirely powered by humans, not artificial intelligence? This Chilean community shows why



Clouds hover over the Andes Mountains in Santiago, Chile, June 19, 2024.

Associated Press

By **MATT O'BRIEN**
AP Technology Writer

About 50 residents of a community outside Chile's capital spent Saturday trying their best to power an entirely human-operated chatbot that could answer questions

and make silly pictures on command, in a message to highlight the environmental toll of artificial intelligence data centers in the region. Organizers say the 12-hour project fielded more than 25,000 requests from around

the world. Asking the Quili. AI website to generate an image of a "sloth playing in the snow" didn't instantly produce an output, as ChatGPT or Google's Gemini would. Instead, someone responded in Spanish to wait a few moments and reminded the user that a human was responding. Then came a drawing about 10 minutes later: a penciled sketch of a cute and cartoonish sloth in a pile of snowballs, with its claws clutching one and about to throw it.

"The goal is to highlight the hidden water footprint behind AI prompting and encourage more responsible use," said a statement from organizer Lorena Antiman of the environmental group Corporación NGEN.

The answers came from a rotating crew of volunteers working on laptops in a community center in Quilicura, a municipality at the urban edge of Santiago that has become a data center hub. Asked by an Associated Press reporter for the identity of who made the sloth drawing, the website responded that it was a local youth who's helping with illustrations. The website responded quickly to questions that drew on residents' cultural knowledge, like how to make Chilean sopaipillas, a fried pastry. When they didn't know the answer, they walked around the room to see if someone else did. "Quili.AI isn't about always having an instant answer. It's about recognizing that not every question needs

one," Antiman said. "When residents don't know something, they can say so, share perspective, or respond with curiosity rather than certainty." She said it's not designed to reject the "incredibly valuable" uses of AI but to think more about the impacts of so much "casual prompting" on water-stressed places like Quilicura.

The backdrop behind the campaign is a debate, in Chile and elsewhere, about the heavy costs of AI usage. Data center computer chips running AI systems require huge amounts of electricity and some also use large volumes of water for cooling, with usage varying depending on location and type of equipment. □

Rock stacking and its harmful effects

(Oranjestad)—The organization Aruba Birdlife Conservation has in the past raised concerns about the phenomenon of “rock stacking” in the area of Baby Beach and warned about the dangers it poses, especially for children.

As known, “rock stacking” is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba’s wilderness. Experts warn that “rock stacking” could even lead certain species to extinction.



In Aruba, much of the “rock stacking” also occurs near Arikok National Park. Although this activity is not illegal in Aruba, it may be time for park authorities to

impose stricter regulations on this activity.

Tourists often believe that the meaning behind this activity is making a wish, but they do not realize its negative impact.

Aruba Birdlife Conservation’s post not only raises alarms about the activity but also now that this phenomenon has reached Baby Beach, some of the stacked stone towers are up to 1.7 meters high, which can be very dangerous, especially for children. □

Best spots to view the sunset



(Oranjestad)—What can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset? Aruba’s sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

California Light House
Of course, being one of the highest points easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House hill not only offers a tremendous view of the sunset, but also a breath taking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot

all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

Manchebo & Eagle Beach
Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the entire western coast of the island. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing—it can only be described as

an experience!

Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just before you drive up the hill to the California Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacu-

lar canvas for the sun to create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple

Hooiberg Hill

These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on top the 587-step stairs and

reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

Casibari Rock Formation

If you’re a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It’s no Yosemite, but it does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back. hue. □



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Prime Minister hands over Carnival 72 authority to the 2026 monarchs



On Sunday, February 1, Carnival 72 officially kicked off after Prime Minister Mike Eman received the 2026 Carnival monarchs at the Bestuurskantoor, where the traditional transfer of authority took place. During the symbolic ceremony, the Prime Minister handed over the Carnival key, thereby granting the monarchs the mandate to lead, take charge of, and guide Aruba's largest cultural celebration.

The transfer of authority is a cultural tradition in which the Government of Aruba



symbolically entrusts Carnival leadership into the hands of the monarchs, recognizing their role as ambassadors of joy, identity, and unity within the community.

The 2026 monarchs are:

Children's Queen Amélie Koolman
 Youth Queen Kyra Jong
 Adult Queen Gabriela Croes
 Mrs. Carnival Marylain Kock
 Children's Prince and Pancho: Kirenzly Petit (Prince Ami) and Maison Gotze (Pancho Abo)
 Youth Prince and Pancho:

Leandray Gomes (Prince Ma) and Jeaven Lanting (Pancho Bisabo)
 Grand Prince and Pancho: Shaundrik Ventura (Prince Los) and Jerwin Mercera (Pancho Eeeee)
 Adult Prince and Pancho: Jairo Maduro (Prince Lanta Para) and Tyson Croes (Pancho Boso por sinta)

SMAC 2026 Monarchs:

Children's Tumba King Jaymerson Kelly
 Youth Tumba Queen Melody Franken
 Children's Calypso King Ashandric Richardson
 Children's Roadmarch



Queen Adeliza Henriquez
 Youth Calypso Queen Caylee Pietersz
 Youth Roadmarch King Brayden Elisabeth
 Tumba King Loco Gino Petrocchi
 Tumba King Rodrick Franken
 After the Children's Prince

and Pancho read their decree, the Prime Minister presented them with the symbolic machete. The Youth Prince and Pancho received their swords, while the Adult and Grand Prince and Pancho received the key, symbolizing their roles as Carnival leaders. □

Lord Lally becomes Soca Monarch 2026!

Delighting the people of Aruba, the most popular song of the season crowned Lord Lally as Soca Monarch 2026.

"The Lizard Kacking," composed by Soilo Sanchez, arranged by Emil Krozendijk, and performed by Lord Lally with Hot Ones Band, created a sensation from its very first presentation.

The Top 5 was completed by:

Mitch with Tsunami, with the song "Kurukuchu," in 5th place;
 Galloway with Tsunami, with the song "Turnaround,"



in 4th place;
 Mighty Tattoo with Zeta Band and the song "Right or Wrong," in 3rd place;
 and Diamond Chip with Groove Masters, singing "Born in Soca," in 2nd place.

In the photo, you can see a large crowd enjoying Lord Lally's performance, courtesy of Awe24.

Lord Lally stole people's heart with his catchy songs, becoming an overnight sensation and meme. Many were left disappointed when Lord Lally did not go over to the finals round



of the competition, and rallied for his return. Stichting Musica (Music Foundation) set up a voting poll to bring back any of one of the participants who did not pass through, and to no one sur-

prise, Lord Lally won with almost all of the vote!

This shows the true spirit of Carnival: the community coming together and celebrating each other! □



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Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel



This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees

up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may

have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and

have their specific talents to boost your immune system.

Concomber chiquito



This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Concomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra

has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruba is Sopi di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

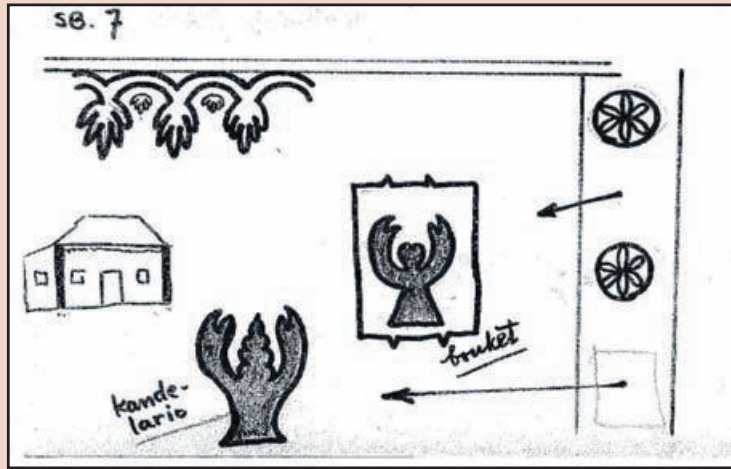
Cas Floria: The Decorated Houses of Aruba

(Oranjestad)—There may be as many as 200 to 300 houses in Aruba that have beautiful decorations, including curtains, stars, flowers, half-moons, etc., placed on the corners or the upper parts of the house.

These houses can be found everywhere, in nearly every district of Aruba. People always thought that these designs came from an Indigenous culture; possibly, the star design resembled the way it was shown, similar to the "God Sun" of the Indigenous people. However, the history of this decorative system does not go very far back in time.

In his book *Millefiori di Aruba*, Father Nooyen declares that the first house to receive this type of decoration was the home of Mr. Bernardo Eman Croes in Pos Chikito. Julien (Janchi) Christiaans and Gregorio (Goy) Semeleer built this house in 1920 and created the decorations on the upper corners of the house. Other people in Pos Chikito, who saw this beautiful work, also wanted their houses decorated in the same way.

Leoncio (Joonchi) Henricus
of Pos Chikito learned the



work from Janchi Christiaans and, together with his son Bonifacio (Bonny) Henricus, continued decorating houses in Pos Chikito and Sabana Basora.

Janchi Christiaans, Goy Semeleer, and others from Noord, such as Hilario Christiaans, Victor Tromp, Gerardo Jacobs, and Cornelis Rosa, brought the same decoration to houses in Noord and Paradera. In 1927, Janchi Christiaans built a house for Julian Tromp in Buguruy.

This was the first house in Noord to receive this type of decoration. Later, those in Paradera, Santa Cruz, and Savaneta copied the house decorations. They practiced these systems up until 1944.

Even today, the patterns are well preserved and protect-



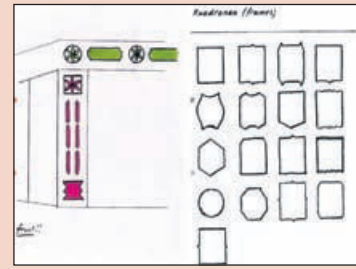
ed, but they are no longer used.

Janchi Christiaans began cutting the patterns out of zinc plates and cardboard. He also had his own creations and systems, while Leoncio and Bonifacio Henricus produced their own fantasies. This is what made these decorations popular: many people could turn their imagination into expressive art.

However, the decoration of houses was not originally Janchi Christiaans's idea. Janchi was a disciple of his father, Hose Christiaans, and of the Donati family, from Italian ancestors. They also made these decorations, though without using any patterns, simply designing and applying them with common plaster as the material.

Using Dr. Johan Hartog's Aruba, Breve Historia as reference, I noticed that he also writes that these designs are not indigenous symbols, but only decorative fantasies. One point of disagreement is that he wrote that in 1820 someone from Curaçao began this type of decoration in Aruba.

This means that, according to Father Nooyen, who declared that it began in 1920,



it would have actually started 100 years earlier. As part of his research, Ito Tromp also interviewed Mr. Julio Maduro of the Department of Labor at that time, who told him that around 1880 Johannes (Janchi) Wolff began with house decorations. And as Janchi himself said, he learned this from his grandfather, who in earlier times had built the first lighthouse at California Point.

After comparing his information, Ito Tromp wrote that Hartog was right concerning the period when decorated houses began in Aruba in 1820. However, it was not people from Curaçao who started it. Victor Tromp, who was 87 years old at the time of writing, was a member of Janchi Wolff's family.

Julio Maduro said that in 1920 they began again with this type of decoration. In general, there is no specific year (up to now) when Arubans first began with this decorative artistic expression. It is interesting to know that these decorations are a kind of symbol for several generations.

For example: Decorations that appear on the house of the Arends family could also be seen on the houses of the Bermudez or Croes families. This was because parents always gave a specific sign to their sons or daughters when they were getting married.

It was also said that these



designs had a certain kind of voodoo purpose, to keep away the spirits of the Indigenous people who were buried in the neighborhoods where the houses now stand. However, this has almost completely disappeared. As for the continuation of these designs from family to family, this is a cultural heritage that is no longer established. For this reason, in earlier times, every young man who married had to have his own house; otherwise, there would be no marriage.

The designs were created according to the individual's imagination. If he saw, for example, six pairs of birds on a tree, he would then paint six pairs of birds on a tree. If he wanted to express his love for his twin children, then he designed a twin.

Nowadays, if you want to use these designs for your house, don't worry—you can simply copy them and paint them. □

Source: E casnan Decora na Aruba (1976) by Ito Tromp.

Aruba to me

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your picture with that text
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its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. 



The Aruban Cunukero: From past to present

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's culture consists of rich historical traditions that make up the Aruban identity and lifestyle. However, the life of the cunukero (farmer) is perhaps the most important aspect of our culture, in a sense representing to locals the true essence of the Aruban.

Historically, cunucus (farms) played a huge role in the early social and economic development of Aruba, and its relevance dates back to the early days of the colonization era. Upon being discovered by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th century, Aruba was used primarily as a ranch, housing horses and cattle brought from Europe. During the Dutch colonization era where the West Indian Company (WIC) dominated the economic sphere on the island, using the land to set up cattle farms and ranches remained popular.

Anthropologist Sidney Mintz divided Caribbean farmers back in four categories:

- The "squatters", who were mostly comprised of illegal and poor colonists, runaway slaves and deserters who took advantage of the Spanish's weak supervision on Caribbean islands like Cuba and the DR;
- Then you have "Early Yeomen", who were legal farmers who came to the west under contract. Once their contract expired, they were given a plot of land for independent use;
- Proto-Peasants were plantation slaves who were allowed to have a small piece of land to grow food for their own consumption. This was to curb the cost of living on the plantations;
- Lastly you have the



"Runaway Peasantries", usually comprised of runaway slaves who acquired farming tools and cattle through stealing or through secret exchanges with other slaves from different plantations.

However, the Aruban cunukeros back then are hard to place, and their history may explain why.

From 1636 (beginning of Dutch colonization era) to before the oil industry in 1924, Aruba's population consisted of mostly farmers. These farmers were mostly indigenous and were characterized as peasants. They weren't allowed to participate in trading, but instead were granted a piece of land to live off of. However, in exchange for this grant, these indigenous farmers were obligated to work for the WIC, doing daily tasks such as taking care of or hunting cattle—large ma-

jority of which were destined for Curacao, clean water tanks and chop wood, among other things.

As much as these farmers were given to opportunity to live "free" with a plot of land, their exclusion from the trading and business world, as well as being deprived the chance to become real property and cattle owners, made them a unique group among Caribbean farmers at the time.

The WIC placed a lot of restrictions on these indigenous farmers—a method to safeguard their cattle deposit on the island. The indigenous farmers were mostly granted less than 7 acres of land. Those who owned bigger land were either once affiliated with the WIC or were colonists who settled on the island to try their luck at farming. In 1767, there were about 120 houses/cunucus on the island.

These Aruban farmers were also limited to the amount of cattle they could keep. Most kept goats as cattle, as only those who were affiliated with the WIC could keep (more) sheep. Of the

76 goat herders on the island, about 45 of them had less than 30 goats, and only 7 of them had more than 60 goats.

It wasn't until the WIC was defunct in late 18th century that these farmers were able to obtain more freedom as cunukeros. After 1824, the government gave these farmers official permission to keep livestock, and the obligations once placed on them were officially discarded.

Because of the dry climate in Aruba, growing food for commercial purposes was not popular. The focus was mainly on cattle herding and taking care of livestock. However, livestock need food to survive, and when Aruba experienced its duper dry climate, many farmers would see a big loss in their livestock, and hence profit.

Although the WIC at one point did try to come up with an initiative to get more people to have land on the island, the climate never really allowed real profit from farming. Because of the climate, Aruban farmers in general could not keep large

quantities of livestock. At a certain point toward the end of the 18th century, the climate got so bad that many farmers decided to leave the island for a while.

For this reason, the farming economy on the island remained small. As the years went by and people noticed that these farms could not really produce any sustainable profit, farmers kept their small piece of land just to live off of. This is why the Aruban cunukeros only played a very tiny role into the plantation economy.

In modern Aruba, cunucus and cunukeros still exist on the island, fortunately with more freedom and more opportunity to tap into the agricultural market. These farmers usually sell their produce on a smaller scale, like during farmers' market events and other types of (holiday) events.

Source: "Arubaans Akkoord: Opstellen over Aruba van voor de komst van de olieindustrie (Aruban Accord: Essays on Aruba Before the Arrival of the Oil Industry)" by Alofs, Luc; Rutgers, Wim; Coomans, Henry E. red. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Hot spot
1 Homer's son cautiously
5 More polite

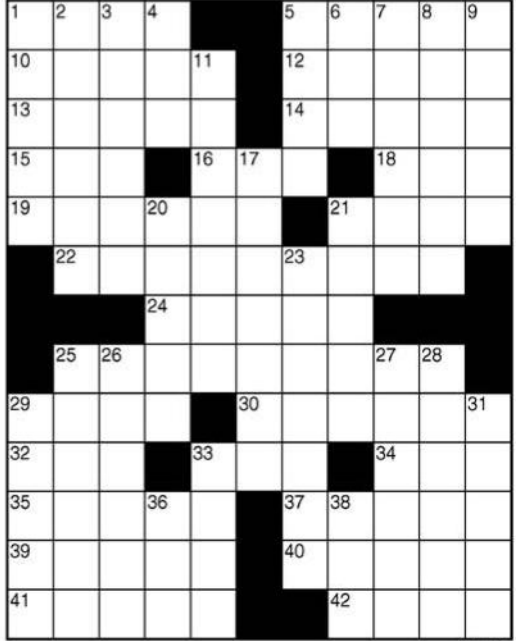
DOWN 1 Trouble
2 Pedro's pals
3 Total at the register
4 Due follower
5 Newborn's need
6 Fury top
7 Curse bleeper
8 Funds Mrs.
9 Coarse files

11 African tongue
17 Avenue in Monopoly
20 Lewis's partner
21 Floppy top
23 Rags
25 Madrid
26 Bamboo eaters

27 Con-vertible
28 Veer suddenly
29 River boat
31 African lilies
33 Addition column
36 Bar cubes
38 Greek vowel



10 Dubai rulers
12 Bowl
13 Muscular power
14 Fixes
15 Easter find
16 Broad st.
18 Soak up
19 Fencer's cry
21 Gift toppers
22 Wood slivers
24 Worship site
25 Track athletes
29 Bill
30 Parliament Hill setting
32 Writer Beattie
33 Vein yield
34 Salon stuff
35 "The Kiss" creator
37 So out, it's in
39 Effortless charm



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-11 CRYPTOQUOTE

BPK'N NXLSMNSK RS FHNX

EPGS, CMCI. ESN'V DTVN WP

FMEYHKW HK NXS LMHK.

— CHEEHS XPEHBMI

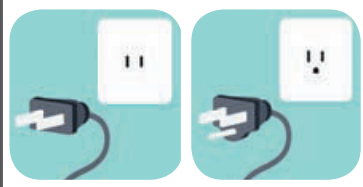
Cryptoquote: THE LOVE WE GIVE AWAY IS THE ONLY LOVE WE KEEP. — ELBERT HUBBARD

Cruise ship Schedule: Feb. 2 - 8 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	02	OCEANIA NAUTICA FREEWINDS - Dept.	07.00 ****	19.00 22.30	C E	1 -
TUE	03	CARNIVAL HORIZON SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00 08.00	22.00 23.00	B C	1 1
WED	04	ROTTERDAM BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 08.00 06.00	17.00 23.00 ****	B C E	1 1 1
THU	05	SILVER SHADOW BRILLIANT LADY NORWEGIAN SKY	13.00 10.00 13.30	**** 22.00 22.30	B C I	1 1 1
FRI	06	SILVER SHADOW - Dept. MARELLA DISCOVERY NORWEGIAN STAR	**** 08.00 11.00	18.00 20.00 20.00	B C I	- 1 1
SAT	07	CARNIVAL LEGEND	09.00	22.00	C	1
SUN	08	CARNIVAL MIRACLE CELEBRITY ASCENT FREEWINDS - Dept.	09.00 09.00 ****	22.00 23.00 22.30	B C E	1 1 -

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

6	2	4	5		1	7		9
9	5	8		2	7	4		
	7		9	4		2		
	4	9		6			1	
1	6			5		9	7	
	3			1		6	8	
7					8		4	3
2				3			9	
4							2	

Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	7	5	4	3	8	1	2
1	2	4	9	6	8	5	7	3
5	8	3	2	1	7	4	9	6
8	9	5	1	3	6	2	4	7
4	7	2	8	5	9	3	6	1
3	1	6	4	7	2	9	8	5
6	5	8	3	9	1	7	2	4
7	3	9	6	2	4	1	5	8
2	4	1	7	8	5	6	3	9

Difficulty: ★★★★★

2/1

Difficulty: ★

2/2

Scientists marvel at a Galapagos seabird that wandered 3,000 miles to California



This photo provided by Melody Baran shows a rare waved albatross spotted off the coast of Point Piedras Blancas, Calif., on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026.

By **MICHAEL R. BLOOD**
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Scientists on a research vessel off the central California coast spotted a waved albatross, marking just the second recorded sighting of the bird north of Central America.

The yellow-billed bird with black button eyes, which can have an 8-foot (2.4-meter) wingspan and spends much of its life airborne over the ocean, also came with a mystery: Researchers wonder how and why a species known to breed in the Galapagos Islands — roughly 3,000 miles (4,800 kilometers) away — ventured so far north.

To scientists, it's a "vagrant" bird, one traveling far outside its typical range. It was spotted 23 miles (37 kilometers) off the coast of Point Piedras Blancas, roughly midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The adult bird "doesn't seem to be in a hurry to get back south," said marine ornithologist Tammy Russell, who was on board the vessel and noted that the same bird apparently was spotted in October off the Northern California coast.

"I can't even believe what I saw," Russell wrote on Facebook. "I'm still in shock." Russell, a contract scientist

with the Farallon Institute and a postdoctoral scholar at the University of California, San Diego, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, said it's all but impossible to determine why the bird ended up so far from its home.

It could have been driven north by a storm. Some birds have a rambling spirit and just go farther than others. "It likely didn't breed last season because adults lay their egg in spring and the chicks leave the nests by January," Russell said in an email. "Perhaps it went wandering on its year off and will soon return to the Galapagos to be reunited with its mate for the next season?"

"Who knows how long it will stay around or if it will ever return?" Russell added. "But that's why these sightings are so special."

Marshall Iliiff, eBird project leader at Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology, said seabirds such as albatrosses can travel great distances in search of food.

"The odd individual routinely may turn up far from home, even in the wrong hemisphere or exceptionally in the wrong ocean," Iliiff said via email. "Food shortages could prompt a bird to wander, but a single bird could also be a fluke accident. There is no evidence at this point that this is anything but a fluke."

Associated Press

The International Union for Conservation of Nature calls the bird — the largest in the Galapagos — critically endangered. According to the American Bird Conservancy, its range is restricted to the tropics. It nests on lava fields amid scattered boulders and sparse vegetation.

The life span of the birds can reach 45 years. They feed primarily on fish, squid and crustaceans.

Russell noted that if multiple birds were being seen in California, it could be a sign they were being driven northward by environmental factors. Previously, she has written about five species of Booby that are now common off California because of warming temperatures and marine heatwaves.

As for the lone albatross, "If this is a sign of this species moving north, we now have some baseline data when we first detected one," Russell added. □



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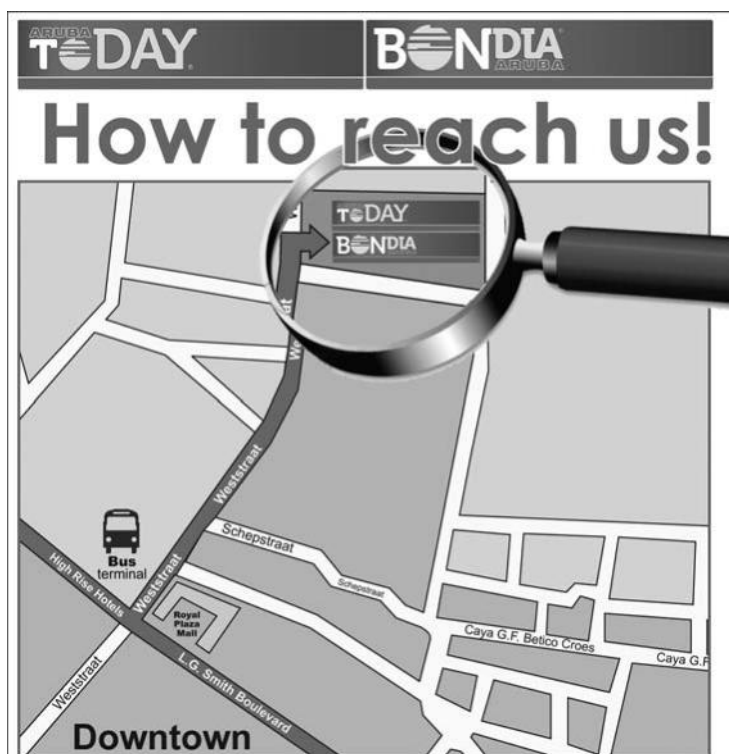
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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

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Oranjestad:

Oduber: Tel. 582 1780

San Nicolas:

Aloe: Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Carlos Alcaraz beats Novak Djokovic to become the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam



Carlos Alcaraz of Spain celebrates after defeating Novak Djokovic of Serbia in the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026.

Associated Press

By JOHN PYE
AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—

Carlos Alcaraz is 22, he's the youngest man ever to win all four of the major titles in tennis, and he had to achieve what no man previously has done to complete the career Grand Slam in Australia. The top-ranked Alcaraz dropped the first set of the Australian Open final in 33 minutes Sunday as Novak Djokovic went out hard in pursuit of an unprecedented 25th major title, but the young Spaniard dug deep to win 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 7-5.

"Means the world to me," Alcaraz said. "It is a dream come true for me."

Djokovic had won all 10 of his previous finals at Melbourne Park and, despite being 38, gave himself every chance

of extending that streak to 11 when he needed only two sets to win.

Alcaraz rose to the challenge.

"Tennis can change on just one point. One point, one feeling, one shot can change the whole match completely," he said. "I played well the first set, but you know, in front of me I had a great and inspired Novak, who was playing great, great shots." A couple of unforced errors from Djokovic early in the second set gave Alcaraz the confidence.

He scrambled to retrieve shots that usually would be winners for Djokovic, and he kept up intense pressure on the most decorated player in men's tennis history. There were extended rallies where

each player hit enough brilliant shots to usually win a game.

Djokovic has made an art-form of rallying from precarious positions. Despite trailing two sets to one, he went within the width of a ball in the fourth set's ninth game of turning this final around.

After fending off six break points in the set, he exhorted the crowd when he got to 30-30. The crowd responded with chants of "Nole, Nole, Nole!"

When Djokovic earned a breakpoint chance — his first since the second set — he whipped up his supporters again. But when Djokovic sent a forehand long on the next point, Alcaraz took it as a reprieve.

A short forehand winner, a mis-hit from Alcaraz, clipped the net and landed inside the line to give him game point. Then Djokovic hit another forehand long.

Alcaraz responded with a roar, and sealed victory by taking two of the next three games.

As he was leaving the court, Alcaraz signed the lens of the TV camera with a recognition: "Job finished. 4/4 Complete."

Teamwork

After paying tribute at the trophy ceremony to Djokovic for being an inspiration, Alcaraz turned to his support

team. He parted ways with longtime coach Juan Carlos Ferrero at the end of last season and Samuel Lopez stepped up to head the team.

"Nobody knows how hard I've been working to get this trophy. I just chased this moment so much," Alcaraz said. "The pre-season was a bit of a rollercoaster emotionally. 'You were pushing me every day to do all the right things,' he added. 'I'm just really grateful for everyone I have in my corner right now.'"

Djokovic's praise

Djokovic joked about this showdown setting up a rivalry over the next 10 years with Alcaraz, but then said it was only right to hand the floor over to the new, 16 years his junior, champion.

"What you've been doing, the best word to describe is historic, legendary," he said. "So congratulations."

Both players were coming off grueling five-set semifinal wins — Alcaraz held off No. 3 Alexander Zverev on Friday; Djokovic's win over two-time defending Australian Open champion Jannik Sinner ended after 1:30 a.m. Saturday — yet showed phenomenal fitness, athleticism and stamina for just over three hours in pursuit of their own historic achievements.

Djokovic won the last of his 24 Grand Slam singles titles at the 2023 U.S. Open, his push

for an unprecedented 25th has now been blocked by Alcaraz or Sinner for nine majors.

Rafa in the house

Djokovic and Rafael Nadal played some epic matches, including the longest match ever at the Australian Open that lasted almost six hours in 2012. Nadal was in the stands Sunday, and both players addressed the 22-time major winner.

"He's my idol, my role model," Alcaraz said. To complete the career Slam "in front of him, it made even more special."

Djokovic, addressing Nadal directly as the "legendary Rafa," joked that there were "too many Spanish legends" in Rod Laver. "It felt like it was two against one tonight," he said.

One for the ages

At 22 years and 272 days, Alcaraz is the youngest man to complete a set of all four major singles titles. He broke the mark set by Don Budge in the 1938 French championships, when he was 22 years and 363 days.

He's the ninth man to achieve the career Grand Slam, a list that also includes Djokovic, Nadal and Roger Federer. Alcaraz now has seven major titles — his first in Australia along with two each at Wimbledon and the French and U.S. Opens. □



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James gestures during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Washington Wizards, Friday, Jan. 30, 2026, in Washington.

Associated Press

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LeBron James' record streak of All-Star Game selections will be on the line Sunday

evening, when the NBA releases the list of 14 players chosen as reserves for the Feb. 15 midseason showcase event.

LeBron James' All-Star selection streak is at stake, with NBA set to announce reserves

James is the All-Star record holder in a number of categories. Among them: his active streak of 21 consecutive selections for the game, along with 20 All-Star appearances and 434 points scored in those contests.

The Los Angeles Lakers star was not chosen as a starter this season in the process that includes voting from fans, media and other players. NBA head coaches choose the reserves and, if necessary, Commissioner Adam Silver will select any additional players necessary for the All-Star rosters should someone need to be

replaced because of injury.

James did not play in last season's All-Star event because of injury.

This season's All-Star Game has a tournament format — U.S. vs. The World, with three teams of at least eight players going head to head in 12-minute games. Each team is guaranteed two games in the round-robin event, with the best two meeting again in a championship game.

The players chosen last month as starters: Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo, Boston's Jaylen

Brown, Detroit's Cade Cunningham, Philadelphia's Tyrese Maxey, New York's Jalen Brunson, Golden State's Stephen Curry, the Lakers' Luka Dončić, Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, Denver's Nikola Jokić and San Antonio's Victor Wembanyama.

The "starter" designation is a bit of a misnomer, since there will be at least 15 players who start in the All-Star Games given that there are three teams. By NBA rule, 10 players are chosen as official "starters" and the 14 others will be listed as "reserves." □

NFL says it will discuss using review for player safety penalties missed by officials

By SCHUYLER DIXON
AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL will discuss using video review to assess penalties for player safety-related violations that are missed by officials, the league said Friday.

Non-calls are currently not reviewable, but penalties such as grabbing the facemask, unnecessary roughness, roughing the passer and hip-drop tackles could be subject to review. It will be an offseason topic for the NFL competition committee. "I would just say from a player health and safety perspective, we would like to introduce all and any opportunity and options for either putting a flag on the field or any way to try to address this in-game," NFL head of football operations Dawn Aponte said in a conference call with reporters.

Facemask penalties have been among the most obvious violations that officials have missed. It would be a significant but not unprecedented change for the NFL. The league made pass interference reviewable in 2019, but it proved unpopular and was scrapped after one season.

"It's a newer conversation," said Jeff Miller, the NFL executive vice president in charge of player safety. "We need to decrease to the extent we can, or improve safety, and one of the ways is to address what happens on field. However we go about doing that is something we'll talk to the committee about."

Aponte said the league issued 30 fines for hip-drop tackles, which put players in danger of sustaining severe knee and ankle injuries. Officials threw just two flags for that tackle, and Aponte said one was an incorrect call and therefore didn't result in a fine.

Concussions on kickoffs

Concussions on kickoffs are up sharply because of a significantly higher number of returns while the rate of head injuries remains lower than it was before a change in the

rules that was designed to make the kickoff safer, officials said.

There were 35 concussions on kickoffs in 2025 compared to eight a year ago, but moving the touchback to the 35-yard line resulted in 1,157 more returns. The kick return rate jumped to 74% from 33% last season, and it was the highest return rate in 15 years.

While the league is encouraged that the concussion, and overall injury, rate is lower than previous kickoffs, when the coverage team had a running start compared to the standing start of the new rule, Miller said concussions would still be a focal point of conversations in the offseason.

"For 20 of the 22 players on the kickoff this year, we saw a decreased injury rate, decreased concussion rates, decreased lower extremity rates," Miller said. "But we did see concussions to the tackler and to the ball-carrier. And so we started the conversation with the competition committee already to take a look at those impacts, to take a look at the formation and structure and the speeds of the play and see if there are ways to address those."

The shell of the helmet has become better at protecting players from concussions but the facemask has not, Miller said. He estimated that half of concussions come from blows to the facemask.

"If a significant number of



New England Patriots linebacker Robert Spillane sits on the turf and an injury against the Denver Broncos during the first half of the AFC Championship NFL football game, Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026, in Denver.

Associated Press

concussions on field ... are a result of blows to the facemask, then we need take a look at the facemasks," Miller said. "There's got to be a better way to do this."

Dr. Allen Sills, the league's chief medical officer, reiterated his belief that coaching technique plays a role in protecting against concussions as well. □



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Create precious memories in the heart of Costa Linda Beach Resort Water's Edge Restaurant offers the complete vacation experience!



(Eagle Beach) – Consider your family dinner plans taken care of at Water's Edge. Located in the heart of the Costa Linda Beach Resort and on the shores of the world-famous Eagle Beach in Aruba, Water's Edge offers an elegant yet cozy dining experience that the entire family can enjoy. Whether you're craving Steak, Seafood, International Dishes or a bit of the Caribbean flare, Water's Edge caters to all your culinary needs, all the while offering you a cozy and flexible service with a spectacular view of Aruba's top-rated sandy beaches.

Water's Edge's new menu has a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts all on one menu specially made just for you. From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. Flexible and professional service allows you to enjoy your meal in the cool and elegant indoor dining area, on the sandy, breezy beaches of Eagle Beach or by the open bar outside. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, Water's Edge has it all for you, any time of the day.

Start your day off with a hearty breakfast. Water's Edge offers a variety of delicious breakfast items, including their house specialties of Avocado Toast, Chicken & Waffles made with homemade Belgium waffles and topped with a gorgeous hot honey sauce. If you want something on the sweeter side, try their Crème Brûlée French Toast, served with an in-house mascarpone whip cream and topped with fresh fruit and powdered sugar. Or maybe the Traditional American Breakfast is more to your liking, complete with any kind of serving of eggs, bacon, sausage and toast, served with a side of hash browns.

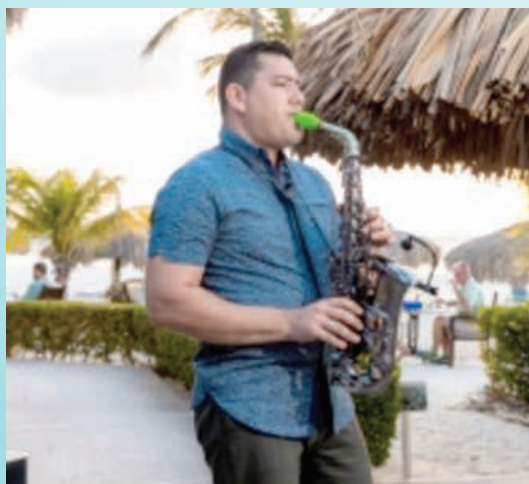
For lunch, keep it easy with their handheld items like their Bacon and Cheddar Burger, Mediterranean Quesadillas or Street Tacos. Want a taste of the Caribbean? Try the Grouper Reuben; A local twist to the traditional Reuben, complete with rye bread, in-house 1000 island dressing, sauerkraut and grilled grouper, served with a side of Cajun Fries.

Dinner plans are set with Water's Edge mouthwatering dinner menu. Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the delectable Coconut Shrimp. You can also opt for their Water's Edge House Wedge Salad or freshly made Shrimp Louie Salad, made with poached shrimp, tossed in Louie dressing, fresh avocados and vine ripe tomatoes. For something a bit heartier, try their classic French Onion Soup, Lobster Bisque or Crab and Corn Chowder.

Follow your appetizers with your choice of Seafood, Chicken or Pasta dishes. Enjoy their succulent Shrimp and Clam Sauce with Angel Hair Pasta, a nice plate of Chicken Francese or explore the Water's Edge Fish Market—your pick of Mahi Mahi, Snapper, Grouper or Salmon, served with homemade mashed potatoes, sauce of choice and fresh herbs and vegetables.

Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of Steak, including a Petite Filet, French Rack of Lambs or their famous 14oz pan-seared Pork finished with a fantastic apple glaze. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi-glaze, mushroom sauce, chimichurri or bacon blue cheese butter. Enjoy it with a side of fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, and four different types of fries. Combine your meal with your personal choice of international and exclusive wines.

Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled Kids Menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians



and gluten-free guests.

End the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness. Choose from a variety of dessert options, including a piece of coconut flan, NY cheesecake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Live entertainment

For seven nights a week, there is live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, every night is a relaxing experience under the stars, where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Water's Edge prides itself on bringing elegance and comfort to your dining experience, offering personalized service fit for everybody's needs.

Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106 or + 297 586 9494 (direct), or reserve your table online at reservations@watersedgearuba.com. For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website watersedgearuba.com 